

PAN

AMSTERDAM

DAATSELAAR THE COLLECTION



La Grande Parade

Signed lower right | Ca 1917 | Oil on canvas | Measurements: H 1.00 m x B ca 3.80 cm (incl. frame)

"La Grande Parade," the largest painting by Dutch artist Piet van der Hem, is a grand and vibrant depiction of early 20th-century social life, embodying a sense of elegance, wealth, and modernity.

La Grande Parade by Piet van der Hem stands as one of the most significant works in the artist's career and is considered a defining piece in his oeuvre. Van der Hem masterfully combines elements of elegance, opulence, and humor to create a dynamic snapshot of Dutch society during the roaring twenties. The bright, vivid colors and confident brushstrokes contribute to the sense of movement and liveliness, drawing the viewer into the scene as if they, too, are participants in this grand parade.

The scene is a bustling depiction of the fashionable and wealthy trading family Stokvis strolling down the street, evoking a sense of movement, elegance, and leisure. The vivid colors, detailed garments, and expressive poses communicate a celebration of life and sophistication. The family members, dressed in fine clothing, reflect the aristocratic and upper class circles of the time, with their carefully styled garments, parasols, and hats conveying both status and the charm of the belle époque. At the center, an elegant white Borzoi dog, known for its association with nobility, is led by a woman in a long dress, contributing to the air of affluence.

The presence of the luxury car, a relatively new invention at the time, reinforces the theme of societal progress and the modernizing world. Behind the figures, greenery suggests a park or boulevard, further anchoring the setting in a cosmopolitan, outdoor space. Van der Hem's skillful use of color and movement invites the viewer to feel the liveliness and energy of the scene. The bright and warm palette emphasizes the outdoor ambiance, while the figures' postures and expressions capture moments of interaction, as if the painting were a snapshot of a specific event in time.

The lady in the car is Deborah Stokvis-Farbstein with her daughter Ellen van der Vlucht-Stokvis. Deborah was a very close friend of Piet van der Hem. At the beginning of the 20th century they made a road trip together through France in Deborah Stokvis' Cadillac with driver.

Piet van der Hem (1885–1961) was a prominent Dutch painter, illustrator, and caricaturist, known for his vibrant

depictions of high society, urban life, and sharp political satire. Early in his career, he participated in a Stedelijk Museum fine art exhibition, working with Piet Mondrian, Leo Gestel and other young painters in the Amsterdam luminism school, the Dutch modern art movement.

From 1907 to 1908, van der Hem lived on Montmartre in Paris for studies. From this period, many drawings, paintings and other depictions of the street and nightlife in Paris are known. These works often remind of artists as Henri de Toulouse-Lautec and Steinlen. After his period in Paris he returned to Amsterdam.

After returning to the Netherlands, Piet van der Hem painted in the working-class neighborhoods of Amsterdam to depict street life. He also worked in picturesque places such as Volendam and Katwijk. Before the First World War, the travel-loving Van der Hem visited various foreign cities, including Madrid, Rome, Saint Petersburg and Moscow.

Throughout his career, Van der Hem became known for his keen ability to capture the essence of the social circles of his era, particularly the bustling, glamorous life of the upper class. His works often depicted well-dressed individuals in vibrant, dynamic settings, as seen in pieces like *La Grande Parade*, where the elegance and energy of society's elite are portrayed with bold colors and fluid movement.

Piet van der Hem settled permanently in The Hague in 1918. At that time he concentrated on painting portraits. Thanks to his great craftsmanship, he became a well-known society painter who immortalized many acquaintances such as ministers, members of the royal family and the dancer Mata Hari. He made a wedding portrait of Prince Bernhard and Juliana in 1937 and a state portrait of the Royal Family in the 1920s.

La Grande Parade is the most impressive work painted by Piet van der Hem known.